

THE PALIMPSEST

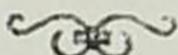
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Captain Willard Glazier

For more than a century adventurous explorers have been lured by the prospects of honors accruing to anyone discovering the source of the Father of Waters. Lieutenant Pike, Governor Cass, and G. C. Beltrami failed in their attempts. It remained for Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to fix the headwaters of the Mississippi in Lake Itasca—which has remained the recognized source.

In 1881 Captain Willard Glazier, a soldier-adventurer, visited Lake Itasca, and, after a few hours spent investigating the various rivulets emptying into that lake, fixed the source in what he modestly called "Glazier Lake." The Minnesota Historical Society was not slow to refute the claims of this "pretended discoverer" and although Glazier wrote two books on his exploits his claim was never recognized.

This issue of *The Palimpsest* is taken from Captain Glazier's *Down the Great River* and records his experiences traveling along the eastern border of Iowa. Incorrect mileages abound, beginning

with his 3,184 miles from Itasca to the Gulf, compared to the accepted distance of 2,466 miles. We have placed in brackets the correct mileage or proper pioneer spelling in a few instances, but have not attempted to change his spelling of Indian names. In the main, however, one can gain a good picture of what a canoeist saw and did paddling down the Mississippi and visiting various Iowa communities.

Glazier began his trip from Lake Itasca on July 21, 1881. He reached Minneapolis on August 26, arrived at Winona on September 9, and left La Crosse on September 14 to begin his journey along the eastern border of Iowa. He beached his canoe at Dubuque on the 17th, arrived at Davenport for a 4-day stay on the 21st, stopped at Burlington on the 27th, and Keokuk on the 29th. Only 15 days were required to pass along the eastern border of Iowa, visiting many communities along the way. He left Keokuk on September 30, on the 71st day from Itasca. Although Glazier spent three days in Hannibal he does not mention Mark Twain. Glazier reached the Gulf of Mexico on November 15th, just 117 days after leaving Itasca.

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